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(54) **Multilayered articles and method of manufacture thereof**

(57) Disclosed herein is multilayered sheet comprising a core layer comprising a thermoplastic polymer and an IR absorbing additive; wherein the IR absorbing additive is a metal oxide; and a first cap layer comprising a thermoplastic polymer and an electromagnetic radiation absorbing additive; wherein a surface of the first cap layer is disposed upon and in intimate contact with a surface of the core layer. Disclosed herein too is a method for manufacturing a multilayered sheet comprising melt

blending a composition comprising a thermoplastic polymer and an IR absorbing additive to produce a core layer; melt blending a composition comprising a thermoplastic polymer and an ultraviolet radiation absorber to produce a first cap layer; combining the core layer with the first cap layer in such a manner that the cap layer is disposed upon and in intimate contact with a surface of the core layer.

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Description**BACKGROUND**

[0001] This disclosure relates to multilayered articles and methods of manufacture. In particular this disclosure relates to multilayered sheets for absorption of IR radiation and methods of manufacture thereof.

[0002] Absorption of excessive amounts of solar radiation by the interior surfaces of a vehicle, residential home or office building can result in elevated interior temperatures, reduced comfort for the occupants, accelerated degradation of interior materials, and an increase in the requirement for larger air conditioning units. In vehicles especially, under high static-soak conditions, which can occur in vehicles parked in the hot summer sun, especially in a desert climate, surface temperature within a closed car can reach over 100°C, and the entire thermal mass of the car can be raised to high temperatures.

[0003] Increasing the cooling load of the air conditioning unit in a vehicle to ameliorate heat discomfort would go against the trend currently prevailing in the automobile industry. Automobile engines are being downsized to reduce weight and improve fuel efficiency and are less able to handle the power drain of the larger air conditioners. A recent concern to industry and Government is the role played by automotive air conditioners as a source of chlorofluorocarbons (CFC) released into the atmosphere, increased cooling load will lead to even larger air conditioning units, which will exacerbate this problem. Thus, there is a need for new technologies and passive design solutions, which would lead to reduced solar heat loads in automobiles as well as for residential and office buildings.

SUMMARY

[0004] Disclosed herein is multilayered sheet comprising a core layer comprising a thermoplastic polymer and an IR absorbing additive; wherein the IR absorbing additive is a metal oxide; and a first cap layer comprising a thermoplastic polymer and an electromagnetic radiation absorbing additive; wherein a surface of the first cap layer is disposed upon and in intimate contact with a surface of the core layer.

[0005] Disclosed herein too is a multilayered sheet comprising a core layer comprising a thermoplastic polymer, cesium tungsten oxide; a thermal stabilizer, and a UV absorbing additive, wherein the IR absorbing additive is a metal oxide; and a first cap layer comprising a thermoplastic polymer and the UV absorbing additive; wherein a surface of the first cap layer is disposed upon and in intimate contact with a surface of the core layer.

[0006] Disclosed herein too is a method for manufacturing a multilayered sheet comprising disposing a first cap layer comprising a thermoplastic polymer and an ultraviolet radiation absorbing additive onto a surface of a core layer comprising a thermoplastic polymer and an IR absorbing additive, wherein the IR absorbing additive is a metal oxide.

[0007] Disclosed herein is a method for manufacturing a multilayered sheet comprising co-extruding a core layer comprising a thermoplastic polymer and an IR absorbing additive with a first cap layer comprising a thermoplastic polymer and an ultraviolet radiation absorber, wherein the IR absorbing additive is a metal oxide.

[0008] Disclosed herein too is a composition comprising a thermoplastic resin and an IR absorbing additive; wherein the IR absorbing additive is a metal oxide.

[0009] Disclosed herein too are articles comprising the multilayered sheet detailed above.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES**[0010]**

Figure 1 is a schematic depicting a core layer disposed between two cap layers;

Figure 2 is a schematic depicting a core layer disposed upon and in intimate contact with a single cap layer; and

Figure 3 is a schematic depiction of a multiwall sheet wherein the respective sheets are separated by brackets and having air pockets in between the brackets;

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0011] It is to be noted that as used herein, the terms "first," "second," and the like do not denote any order or importance, but rather are used to distinguish one element from another, and the terms "the", "a" and "an" do not denote a limitation of quantity, but rather denote the presence of at least one of the referenced item. Furthermore, all ranges disclosed herein are inclusive of the endpoints and independently combinable.

[0012] Disclosed herein is a multilayered sheet that displays high absorption of light in the ultra-violet (UV) region of

the electromagnetic spectrum, high absorption and high reflectance of light in the near infrared (IR) region, while providing high transmittance and low reflectance for light in the visible region. The multilayered sheet comprises a core layer comprising a thermoplastic polymer and an IR absorbing additive. In one embodiment, a surface of the core layer is disposed on and in intimate contact with a surface of a first cap layer comprising a thermoplastic polymer and an electromagnetic radiation absorbing additive. In another embodiment, a surface of the core layer is disposed between and in intimate contact with a surface of a first and a second cap layer, each of which comprises a thermoplastic polymer and an electromagnetic radiation absorbing additive. The multilayered sheet is generally mounted in any application (e.g., a building or automobile) in such a manner so that solar radiation impinges upon the cap layer prior to impinging upon the core layer. The multilayered sheet is manufactured by co-extrusion, and this will be detailed later. It is to be noted that all ranges disclosed herein are inclusive and combinable.

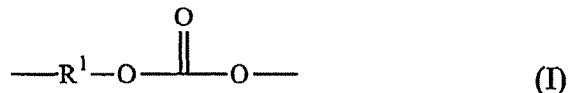
[0013] The electromagnetic radiation absorbing additive may be an absorber of any radiation from the electromagnetic spectrum. In an exemplary embodiment, the electromagnetic radiation absorbing additive is an ultraviolet (UV) radiation absorber. In another exemplary embodiment, the electromagnetic radiation absorbing additive is an IR absorbing additive that can absorb IR radiation. In yet another exemplary embodiment, the electromagnetic radiation absorbing additive is an additive that can absorb IR radiation and UV radiation.

[0014] Disclosed herein too is a composition for manufacturing the core layer of a multilayered sheet. The composition advantageously comprises a thermoplastic polymer and an IR absorbing additive. In one embodiment, the composition can be used as a masterbatch. In another embodiment, the composition advantageously comprises a thermoplastic polymer, an IR absorbing additive and a UV absorbing additive. In yet another embodiment, the composition advantageously comprises a thermoplastic polymer, an IR absorbing additive, a UV absorbing additive and a thermal stabilizer.

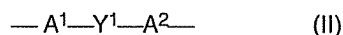
[0015] Figure 1 is a schematic depicting a surface of a core layer disposed in between the surface of a first and the surface of a second cap layer, while Figure 2 is a schematic depicting a surface of a core layer disposed upon and in intimate contact with a surface of only the first cap layer. Both the core and the cap layers may be a single sheet of a thermoplastic polymer or multiple sheets of a thermoplastic polymer. From the Figures 1 and 2, it may be seen that the thickness of the multilayer sheet refers to the thickness of the core layer added to the thickness of the cap layer.

[0016] As stated above, both, the core and the cap layer comprise thermoplastic resins. Thermoplastic polymers that may be used are oligomers, polymers, ionomers, dendrimers, copolymers such as block copolymers, graft copolymers, star block copolymers, random copolymers, and the like, as well as combinations comprising at least one of the foregoing polymers. Suitable examples of thermoplastic polymers that can be used as the core and cap layer are polyacetals, polyacrylics, polycarbonates polystyrenes, polyesters, polyamides, polyamideimides, polyarylates, polyarylsulfones, polyethersulfones, polyphenylene sulfides, polyvinyl chlorides, polysulfones, polyimides, polyetherimides, polytetrafluoroethylenes, polyetherketones, polyether etherketones, polyether ketone ketones, polybenzoxazoles, polyoxadiazoles, polybenzothiazinophenothiazines, polybenzothiazoles, polypyrazinoquinoxalines, polypyromellitimides, polyquinoxalines, polybenzimidazoles, polyoxindoles, polyoxoisindolines, polydioxoisindolines, polytriazines, polypyridazines, polypiperazines, polypyridines, polypiperidines, polytriazoles, polypyrazoles, polypyrrolidines, polycarbonates, polyoxabicyclononanes, polydibenzofurans, polyphthalides, polyacetals, polyanhydrides, polyvinyl ethers, polyvinyl thioethers, polyvinyl alcohols, polyvinyl ketones, polyvinyl halides, polyvinyl nitriles, polyvinyl esters, polysulfonates, polysulfides, polythioesters, polysulfones, polysulfonamides, polyureas, polyphosphazenes, polysilazanes, or the like, or combinations comprising at least one of the foregoing thermoplastic polymers. The preferred thermoplastic polymers for use in the core layer are polycarbonates or copolymers of polycarbonate and polysiloxane. The preferred thermoplastic polymers for use in the cap layer are polycarbonate, copolyestercarbonates, or blends of polyesters with polycarbonates.

[0017] As stated above, the core layer may be a single sheet of a thermoplastic polymer or multiple sheets of a thermoplastic polymer. It is preferred for the thermoplastic polymer to be transparent to light in the optical wavelength region of the electromagnetic spectrum. The core layer generally comprises a polycarbonate and an IR absorbing additive. As used herein, the terms "polycarbonate", "polycarbonate composition", and "composition comprising aromatic carbonate chain units" includes compositions having structural units of the formula (I):



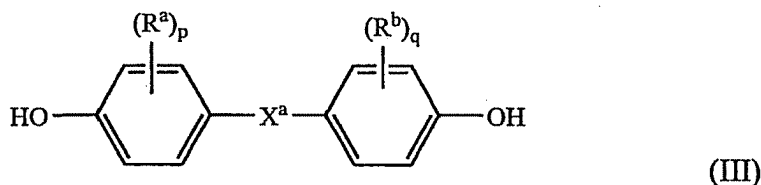
in which greater than or equal to about 60 percent of the total number of R¹ groups are aromatic organic radicals and the balance thereof are aliphatic, alicyclic, or aromatic radicals. Preferably, R¹ is an aromatic organic radical and, more preferably, a radical of the formula (II):



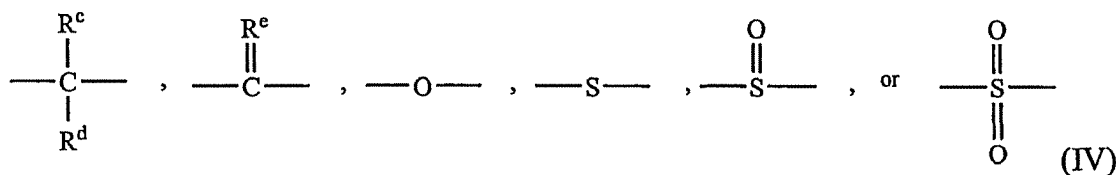
wherein each of A¹ and A² is a monocyclic divalent aryl radical and Y¹ is a bridging radical having zero, one, or two atoms which separate A¹ from A². In an exemplary embodiment, one atom separates A¹ from A². Illustrative examples of the Y¹ radicals are -O-, -S-, -S(O)-, -S(O)₂-, -C(O)-, methylene, cyclohexyl-methylene, 2-[2,2,1]-bicycloheptylidene, ethylidene, isopropylidene, neopentylidene, cyclohexylidene, cyclopentadecylidene, cyclododecylidene, adamantylidene, or the like. In another embodiment, zero atoms separate A¹ from A², with an illustrative example being biphenyl. The bridging radical Y¹ can be a saturated hydrocarbon group such as methylene, cyclohexylidene or isopropylidene.

[0018] Polycarbonates may be produced by the Schotten-Bauman interfacial reaction of the carbonate precursor with dihydroxy compounds. Typically, an aqueous base such as sodium hydroxide, potassium hydroxide, calcium hydroxide, or the like, is mixed with an organic, water immiscible solvent such as benzene, toluene, carbon disulfide, or dichloromethane, which contains the dihydroxy compound. A phase transfer agent is generally used to facilitate the reaction. Molecular weight regulators may be added either singly or in admixture to the reactant mixture. Branching agents, described forthwith may also be added singly or in admixture.

[0019] Polycarbonates can be produced by the interfacial reaction of dihydroxy compounds in which only one atom separates A¹ and A². As used herein, the term "dihydroxy compound" includes, for example, bisphenol compounds having general formula (III) as follows:



wherein R^a and R^b each independently represent hydrogen, a halogen atom, preferably bromine, or a monovalent hydrocarbon group, p and q are each independently integers from 0 to 4, and X^a represents one of the groups of formula (IV):

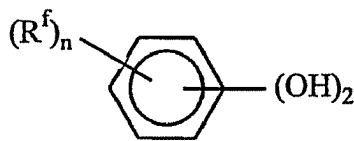


wherein R^c and R^d each independently represent a hydrogen atom or a monovalent linear or cyclic hydrocarbon group, and R^e is a divalent hydrocarbon group, oxygen, or sulfur.

[0020] Examples of the types of bisphenol compounds that may be represented by formula (III) include the bis(hydroxyaryl)alkane series such as, 1,1-bis(4-hydroxyphenyl)methane, 1,1-bis(4-hydroxyphenyl)ethane, 2,2-bis(4-hydroxyphenyl)propane (or bisphenol-A), 2,2-bis(4-hydroxyphenyl)butane, 2,2-bis(4-hydroxyphenyl)octane, 1,1-bis(4-hydroxyphenyl)propane, 1,1-bis(4-hydroxyphenyl)n-butane, bis(4-hydroxyphenyl)phenylmethane, 2,2-bis(4-hydroxy-1-methylphenyl)propane, 1,1-bis(4-hydroxy-t-butylphenyl)propane, 2,2-bis(4-hydroxy-3-bromophenyl)propane, or the like; bis(hydroxyaryl)cycloalkane series such as, 1,1-bis(4-hydroxyphenyl)cyclopentane, 1,1-bis(4-hydroxyphenyl)cyclohexane, or the like, or combinations comprising at least one of the foregoing bisphenol compounds.

[0021] Other bisphenol compounds that may be represented by formula (III) include those where X is -O-, -S-, -SO- or -S(O)₂-. Some examples of such bisphenol compounds are bis(hydroxyaryl)ethers such as 4,4'-dihydroxy diphenylether, 4,4'-dihydroxy-3,3'-dimethylphenyl ether, or the like; bis(hydroxy diaryl)sulfides, such as 4,4'-dihydroxy diphenyl sulfide, 4,4'-dihydroxy-3,3'-dimethyl diphenyl sulfide, or the like; bis(hydroxy diaryl) sulfoxides, such as, 4,4'-dihydroxy diphenyl sulfoxides, 4,4'-dihydroxy-3,3'-dimethyl diphenyl sulfoxides, or the like; bis(hydroxy diaryl)sulfones, such as 4,4'-dihydroxy diphenyl sulfone, 4,4'-dihydroxy-3,3'-dimethyl diphenyl sulfone, or the like; or combinations comprising at least one of the foregoing bisphenol compounds.

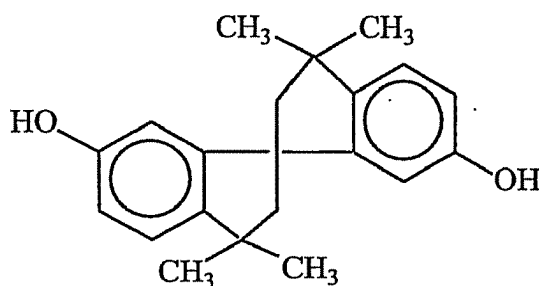
[0022] Other bisphenol compounds that may be utilized in the polycondensation of polycarbonate are represented by the formula (V)



(V)

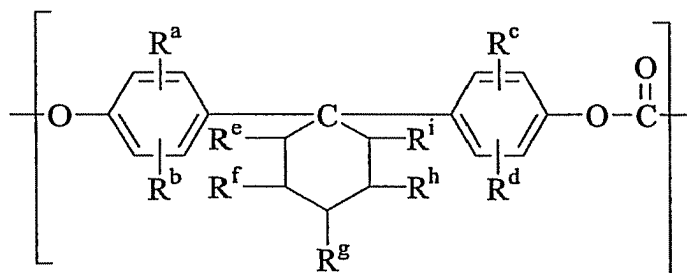
wherein, R^f is a halogen atom of a hydrocarbon group having 1 to 10 carbon atoms or a halogen substituted hydrocarbon group; n is a value from 0 to 4. When n is at least 2, R^f may be the same or different. Examples of bisphenol compounds that may be represented by the formula (V), are resorcinol, substituted resorcinol compounds such as 5-methyl resorcin, 5-ethyl resorcin, 5-propyl resorcin, 5-butyl resorcin, 5-t-butyl resorcin, 5-phenyl resorcin, 5-cumyl resorcin, or the like; catechol, hydroquinone, substituted hydroquinones, such as 3-methyl hydroquinone, 3-ethyl hydroquinone, 3-propyl hydroquinone, 3-butyl hydroquinone, 3-t-butyl hydroquinone, 3-phenyl hydroquinone, 3-cumyl hydroquinone, or the like; or combinations comprising at least one of the foregoing bisphenol compounds.

[0023] Bisphenol compounds such as 2,2, 2', 2'- tetrahydro-3, 3, 3', 3'- tetramethyl-1, 1'-spirobi-[IH-indene]-6, 6'- diol represented by the following formula (VI) may also be used.



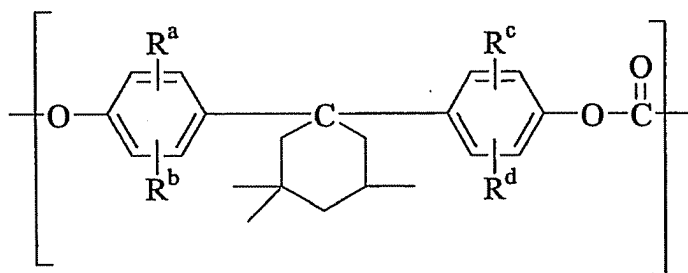
(VI)

[0024] Suitable polycarbonates further include those derived from bisphenols containing alkyl cyclohexane units. Such polycarbonates have structural units corresponding to the formula (VII)



(VII)

wherein R^a - R^d are each independently hydrogen, C_1 - C_{12} hydrocarbonyl, or halogen; and R^e - R^j are each independently hydrogen, C_1 - C_{12} hydrocarbonyl. As used herein, "hydrocarbonyl" refers to a residue that contains only carbon and hydrogen. The residue may be aliphatic or aromatic, straight-chain, cyclic, bicyclic, branched, saturated, or unsaturated. The hydrocarbonyl residue may contain heteroatoms over and above the carbon and hydrogen members of the substituent residue. Thus, when specifically noted as containing such heteroatoms, the hydrocarbonyl residue may also contain carbonyl groups, amino groups, hydroxyl groups, or the like, or it may contain heteroatoms within the backbone of the hydrocarbonyl residue. Alkyl cyclohexane containing bisphenols, for example the reaction product of two moles of a phenol with one mole of a hydrogenated isophorone, are useful for making polycarbonate polymers with high glass transition temperatures and high heat distortion temperatures. Such isophorone bisphenol-containing polycarbonates have structural units corresponding to the formula (VIII)

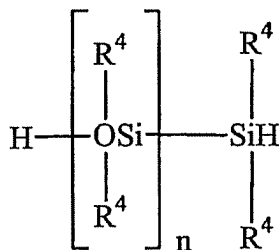


(VIII)

wherein R^a - R^d are as defined above. These isophorone bisphenol based polymers, including polycarbonate copolymers made containing non-alkyl cyclohexane bisphenols and blends of alkyl cyclohexyl bisphenol containing polycarbonates with non-alkyl cyclohexyl bisphenol polycarbonates, are supplied by Bayer Co. under the APEC trade name. The preferred bisphenol compound is bisphenol A.

[0025] In one embodiment, the dihydroxy compound may be reacted with a hydroxyaryl-terminated poly(diorganosiloxane) to create a polycarbonate-polysiloxane copolymer. Preferably the polycarbonate-poly(diorganosiloxane) copolymers are made by introducing phosgene under interfacial reaction conditions into a mixture of a dihydroxy compound, such as BPA, and a hydroxyaryl-terminated poly(diorganosiloxane). The polymerization of the reactants can be facilitated by use of a tertiary amine catalyst or a phase transfer catalyst.

[0026] The hydroxyaryl-terminated poly(diorganosiloxane) can be made by effecting a platinum catalyzed addition between a siloxane hydride of the formula (IX),



(IX)

and an aliphatically unsaturated monohydric phenol wherein R^4 is, for example, $C_{(1-8)}$ alkyl radicals, haloalkyl radicals such as trifluoropropyl and cyanoalkyl radicals; aryl radicals such as phenyl, chlorophenyl and tolyl. R^4 is preferably methyl, or a mixture of methyl and trifluoropropyl, or a mixture of methyl and phenyl.

[0027] Some of the aliphatically unsaturated monohydric phenols, which can be used to make the hydroxyaryl-terminated poly(diorganosiloxane)s are, for example, eugenol, 2-alkylphenol, 4-allyl-2-methylphenol, 4-allyl-2-phenylphenol, 4-allyl-2-bromophenol, 4-allyl-2-t-butoxyphenol, 4-phenyl-2-phenylphenol, 2-methyl-4-propylphenol, 2-allyl-4,6-dimethylphenol, 2-allyl-4-bromo-6-methylphenol, 2-allyl-6-methoxy-4-methylphenol, 2-allyl-4,6-dimethylphenol, or the like, or a combination comprising at least one of the foregoing.

[0028] Typical carbonate precursors include the carbonyl halides, for example carbonyl chloride (phosgene), and carbonyl bromide; the bis-haloformates, for example the bis-haloformates of dihydric phenols such as bisphenol A, hydroquinone, or the like, and the bis-haloformates of glycols such as ethylene glycol and neopentyl glycol; and the diaryl carbonates, such as diphenyl carbonate, di(tolyl) carbonate, and di(naphthyl) carbonate. The preferred carbonate precursor for the interfacial reaction is carbonyl chloride.

[0029] It is also possible to employ polycarbonates resulting from the polymerization of two or more different dihydric phenols or a copolymer of a dihydric phenol with a glycol or with a hydroxy- or acid-terminated polyester or with a dibasic acid or with a hydroxy acid or with an aliphatic diacid in the event a carbonate copolymer rather than a homopolymer is desired for use. Generally, useful aliphatic diacids have about 2 to about 40 carbons. A preferred aliphatic diacid is dodecanedioic acid.

[0030] Branched polycarbonates, as well as blends of linear polycarbonate and a branched polycarbonate may also be used in the core layer. The branched polycarbonates may be prepared by adding a branching agent during polymerization. These branching agents may comprise polyfunctional organic compounds containing at least three functional groups, which may be hydroxyl, carboxyl, carboxylic anhydride, haloformyl, and combinations comprising at least one

of the foregoing branching agents. Specific examples include trimellitic acid, trimellitic anhydride, trimellitic trichloride, tris-p-hydroxy phenyl ethane, isatin-bis-phenol, tris-phenol TC (1,3,5-tris((p-hydroxyphenyl)isopropyl)benzene), tris-phenol PA (4(4(1, 1-bis(p-hydroxyphenyl)-ethyl) α,α -dimethyl benzyl)phenol), 4-chloroformyl phthalic anhydride, trimesic acid, benzophenone tetracarboxylic acid, or the like, or combinations comprising at least one of the foregoing branching agents. The branching agents may be added at a level of about 0.05 to about 4.0 weight percent (wt%), based upon the total weight of the polycarbonate in a given layer.

[0031] In one embodiment, the polycarbonate may be produced by a melt polycondensation reaction between a dihydroxy compound and a carbonic acid diester. Examples of the carbonic acid diesters that may be utilized to produce the polycarbonates are diphenyl carbonate, bis(2,4-dichlorophenyl)carbonate, bis(2,4,6-trichlorophenyl) carbonate, bis(2-cyanophenyl) carbonate, bis(o-nitrophenyl) carbonate, ditolyl carbonate, m-cresyl carbonate, dinaphthyl carbonate, bis(diphenyl) carbonate, diethyl carbonate, dimethyl carbonate, dibutyl carbonate, dicyclohexyl carbonate, bis(o-methoxycarbonylphenyl)carbonate, bis(o-ethoxycarbonylphenyl)carbonate, bis(o-propoxycarbonylphenyl)carbonate, bis-ortho methoxy phenyl carbonate, bis(o-butoxycarbonylphenyl)carbonate, bis(isobutoxycarbonylphenyl)carbonate, o-methoxycarbonylphenyl-o-ethoxycarbonylphenylcarbonate, bis o-(tert-butoxycarbonylphenyl)carbonate, o-ethylphenyl-o-methoxycarbonylphenyl carbonate, p-(tertbutylphenyl)-o-(tert-butoxycarbonylphenyl)carbonate, bis-methyl salicyl carbonate, bis-ethyl salicyl carbonate, bis-propyl salicyl carbonate, bis-butyl salicyl carbonate, bis-benzyl salicyl carbonate, bis-methyl 4-chlorosalicyl carbonate or the like, or combinations comprising at least one of the foregoing carbonic acid diesters.

[0032] The preferred carbonic acid diester is diphenyl carbonate or bis-methyl salicyl carbonate.

[0033] Preferably, the weight average molecular weight of the polycarbonate is about 3,000 to about 1,000,000 grams/mole (g/mole). In one embodiment, the polycarbonate has a molecular weight of about 10,000 to about 100,000 g/mole. In another embodiment, the polycarbonate has a molecular weight of about 20,000 to about 50,000 g/mole. In yet another embodiment, the polycarbonate has a molecular weight of about 25,000 to about 35,000 g/mole.

[0034] The thermoplastic polymer is generally used in amounts of about 70 to about 99.9 weight percent (wt%) based upon the weight of the core layer. In one embodiment, the thermoplastic polymer is present in an amount of about 75 to about 99.7 wt%, based on the total weight of the core layer. In another embodiment, the thermoplastic polymer is present in an amount of about 80 to about 99.5 wt%, based on the total weight of the core layer. In yet another embodiment, the thermoplastic polymer is present in an amount of about 85 to about 97 wt%, based on the total weight of the core layer.

[0035] The IR absorbing additives are generally fine particles of a metal oxide. Examples of suitable metal oxides are potassium tungsten oxide $K(WO_3)_3$, rubidium tungsten oxide $(Rb(WO_3)_3)$, cesium tungsten oxide $(Cs(WO_3)_3)$, thallium tungsten oxide $(Tl(WO_3)_3)$, or the like, or a combination comprising at least one of the foregoing oxides. An exemplary metal oxide is cesium tungsten oxide $(Cs(WO_3)_3)$. In one embodiment, it is desirable for the particles of the cesium tungsten oxide to have nanometer sized dimensions. In another embodiment, it is desirable for the particles of the cesium tungsten oxide to have micrometer sized dimensions.

[0036] The IR absorbing additives may additionally comprise fine particles of a metal boride or a boride such as such as lanthanum boride (LaB_6), praseodymium boride (PrB_6), neodymium boride (NdB_6), cerium boride (CeB_6), gadolinium boride (GdB_6), terbium boride (TbB_6), dysprosium boride (DyB_6), holmium boride (HoB_6), yttrium boride (YB_6), samarium boride (SmB_6), europium boride (EuB_6), erbium boride (ErB_6), thulium boride (TmB_6), ytterbium boride (YbB_6), lutetium boride (LuB_6), strontium boride (SrB_6), calcium boride (CaB_6), titanium boride (TiB_2), zirconium boride (ZrB_2), hafnium boride (HfB_2), vanadium boride (VB_2), tantalum boride (TaB_2), chromium borides (CrB and CrB_2), molybdenum borides (MoB_2 , Mo_2B_5 and MoB), tungsten boride (W_2B_5), or the like, or combinations comprising at least one of the foregoing borides.

[0037] It is desirable for the IR absorbing additives to be in the form of nanosized particles prior to the dispersion into the polycarbonate. There is no particular limitation to the shape of the particles, which may be for example, spherical, irregular, plate-like or whisker like. The nanosized particles may generally have average largest dimensions of less than or equal to about 200 nanometers (nm). In one embodiment, the particles may have average largest dimensions of less than or equal to about 150 nm. In another embodiment, the particles may have average largest dimensions of less than or equal to about 100 nm. In yet another embodiment, the particles may have average largest dimensions of less than or equal to about 75 nm. In yet another embodiment, the particles may have average largest dimensions of less than or equal to about 50 nm. As stated above, the nanosized particles may generally have average largest dimensions of less than or equal to about 200 nm. In one embodiment, more than 90% of the particles have average largest dimensions less than or equal to about 200 nm. In another embodiment, more than 95% of the particles have average largest dimensions less than or equal to about 200 nm. In yet another embodiment, more than 99% of the particles have average largest dimensions less than or equal to about 200 nm. Bimodal or higher particle size distributions may be used.

[0038] The IR absorbing additives are generally used in amounts of about 0.001 gram/square meter (g/m^2) to about 5.0 g/m^2 . In one embodiment, the IR absorbing additive may be used in amounts of about 0.03 to about 1.0 g/m^2 . In another embodiment, the IR absorbing additive may be used in amounts of about 0.05 to about 0.75 g/m^2 . In yet another embodiment, the IR absorbing additive may be used in amounts of about 0.09 to about 0.36 g/m^2 .

[0039] The IR absorbing additives are generally used in amounts of about 0.02 ppm to about 3000 ppm based on the total weight of the core layer. In one embodiment, the IR absorbing additive may be used in amounts of about 1 ppm to about 1500 ppm, based on the total weight of the core layer. In another embodiment, the IR absorbing additive may be used in amounts of about 1.5 ppm to about 1250 ppm based on the total weight of the core layer. In yet another embodiment, the IR absorbing additive may be used in amounts of about 2.5 ppm to about 600 ppm, based on the total weight of the core layer and depending on the thickness of the sheet.

[0040] When the composition used to form the core layer is used as a masterbatch, it can comprise the IR absorbing additive in an amount of about 0.1 to about 80 wt%, based on the total weight of the composition. In one embodiment, the masterbatch can comprise the IR absorbing additive in an amount of about 1 to about 50 wt%, based on the total weight of the composition. In another embodiment, the masterbatch can comprise the IR absorbing additive in an amount of about 3 to about 30 wt%, based on the total weight of the composition. In yet another embodiment, the masterbatch can comprise the IR absorbing additive in an amount of about 5 to about 20 wt%, based on the total weight of the composition.

[0041] In one embodiment, the core layer may contain thermal stabilizers to compensate for the increase in temperature brought on by the interaction of the IR light with the IR absorbing additives. Additionally the addition of thermal stabilizers protects the material during processing operations such as melt blending. In general, a layer of polycarbonate containing the IR absorbing additives may experience an increase in temperature of up to about 20°C, upon exposure to light. The addition of thermal stabilizers to the core layer improves the long term aging characteristics and increases the life cycle of the multilayer sheet. In another embodiment, UV stabilizers may also be optionally added to the core layer to prevent against UV degradation. Suitable thermal stabilizers include phosphites, phosphonites, phosphines, hindered amines, hydroxyl amines, phenols, acryloyl modified phenols, hydroperoxide decomposers, benzofuranone derivatives, or the like, or combinations comprising at least one of the foregoing thermal stabilizers. Suitable thermal stabilizers that are commercially available are IRGAPHOS® 168, DOVERPHOS® S-9228, ULTRANOX® 641, while suitable commercially available UV stabilizers are TINUVIN® 329, TINUVIN® 234, TINUVIN® 350, TINUVIN® 360 or UVINOL® 3030. If desirable, an optional co-stabilizer such as a cyclo aliphatic epoxy polymer or IRGANOX® 1076 may also be added to improve thermal stability of the core layer. The preferred thermal stabilizers are phosphites.

[0042] It is generally desirable to add the thermal stabilizer in an amount of about 0.001 to about 3 wt%, based on the total weight of the core layer. In one embodiment, the thermal stabilizer may be added in amounts of about 0.002 to about 0.5 wt%, based on the total weight of the core layer. In another embodiment, the thermal stabilizer may be added in amounts of about 0.005 to about 0.2 wt%, based on the total weight of the core layer. In yet another embodiment, the thermal stabilizer may be added in amounts of about 0.01 to about 0.1 wt%, based on the total weight of the core layer. If a co-stabilizer is added, it is generally desirable to add it in amount of about 0.001 to about 2 wt%, based on the total weight of the core layer.

[0043] In addition to the thermal stabilizers and the UV stabilizer, other additives such as mold release agents, pigments, dyes, impact modifiers, lubricants, anti-oxidants, antimicrobials, flame retardants, visual effect additives, fibers such as carbon fibers, glass fibers, carbon nanotubes, or the like; antistatic agents, plasticizers, fillers such as fumed silica, aerogels, carbon black, or the like; can be added to both the core and the cap layers.

[0044] It is generally desirable for the core layer to have a thickness of about 0.5 to about 30 mm. In one embodiment, the core layer may have a thickness of about 0.75 to about 25 mm. In another embodiment, the core layer may have a thickness of about 0.85 to about 20 mm. In yet another embodiment, the core layer may have a thickness of about 1 to about 15 mm.

[0045] As stated above, the multilayered sheet may comprise a single cap layer disposed on and in intimate contact with the core layer. Alternatively, the multilayered sheet may comprise two cap layers, one cap layer disposed on either surface of the core layer and in intimate contact with it. The cap layer also generally comprises a thermoplastic polymer. Suitable thermoplastic polymers are polycarbonate, copolyestercarbonates, or blends of polyesters with polycarbonates. The polyesters may be cycloaliphatic polyesters, polyarylates or a combination of cycloaliphatic polyesters with polyarylates.

[0046] Cycloaliphatic polyesters suitable for use in the cap layer are those that are characterized by optical transparency, improved weatherability, chemical resistance, and low water absorption. It is also generally desirable that the cycloaliphatic polyesters have good melt compatibility with the thermoplastic polymers used in the core layer. In an exemplary embodiment, it is preferred to use a cycloaliphatic polyester that displays good melt compatibility with the polycarbonate used in the core layer. Cycloaliphatic polyesters are generally prepared by reaction of a diol with a dibasic acid or derivative. The diols useful in the preparation of the cycloaliphatic polyester polymers for use as the high quality optical sheets are straight chain, branched, or cycloaliphatic, preferably straight chain or branched alkane diols, and may contain from 2 to 12 carbon atoms.

[0047] Suitable examples of diols include ethylene glycol, propylene glycol such as 1,2- and 1,3-propylene glycol, and the like; butane diol such as 1,3- and 1,4-butane diol, and the like; diethylene glycol, 2,2-dimethyl-1,3-propane diol, 2-ethyl, 2-methyl, 1,3-propane diol, 1,3- and 1,5-pentane diol, dipropylene glycol, 2-methyl-1,5-pentane diol, 1,6-hexane

diol, 1,4- cyclohexane dimethanol and particularly its cis- and trans-isomers, triethylene glycol, 1,10-decane diol, and combinations comprising at least one of the foregoing diols. Particularly preferred is dimethanol bicyclo octane, dimethanol decalin, a cycloaliphatic diol or chemical equivalents thereof, and particularly 1,4-cyclohexane dimethanol or its chemical equivalents. If 1,4-cyclohexane dimethanol is to be used as the diol component, it is generally preferred to use a mixture of cis- to trans-isomes in ratios of about 1:4 to about 4:1. Within this range, it is generally desired to use a ratio of cis- to trans- isomers of about 1:3.

[0048] The diacids useful in the preparation of the cycloaliphatic polyester polymers are aliphatic diacids that include carboxylic acids having two carboxyl groups each of which are attached to a saturated carbon in a saturated ring. Suitable examples of cycloaliphatic acids include decahydro naphthalene dicarboxylic acid, norbornene dicarboxylic acids, bicyclo octane dicarboxylic acids. Preferred cycloaliphatic diacids are 1,4-cyclohexanedicarboxylic acid and trans-1, 4-cyclohexanedicarboxylic acids. Linear aliphatic diacids are also useful provided the polyester has at least one monomer containing a cycloaliphatic ring. Illustrative examples of linear aliphatic diacids are succinic acid, adipic acid, dimethyl succinic acid, and azelaic acid. Mixtures of diacid and diols may also be used to make the cycloaliphatic polyesters.

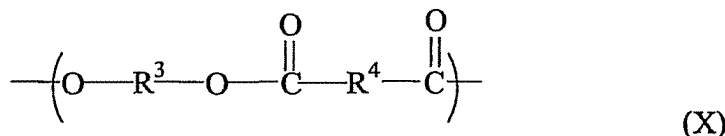
[0049] Cyclohexanedicarboxylic acids and their chemical equivalents can be prepared, for example, by the hydrogenation of cycloaromatic diacids and corresponding derivatives such as isophthalic acid, terephthalic acid or naphthalenic acid in a suitable solvent (e.g., water or acetic acid) at room temperature and at atmospheric pressure using catalysts such as rhodium supported on a carrier comprising carbon and alumina. They may also be prepared by the use of an inert liquid medium wherein an acid is at least partially soluble under reaction conditions and a catalyst of palladium or ruthenium in carbon or silica is used.

[0050] Generally, during hydrogenation, two or more isomers are obtained in which the carboxylic acid groups are in cis- or trans-positions. The cis- and trans-isomers can be separated by crystallization with or without a solvent, for example, n-heptane, or by distillation. The cis-isomer tends to be more miscible, however, the trans-isomer has higher melting and crystallization temperatures and is especially preferred. Mixtures of the cis- and trans-isomers may also be used, and preferably when such a mixture is used, the trans-isomer will preferably comprise at least about 75 wt% and the cis-isomer will comprise the remainder based on the total weight of cis- and trans-isomers combined. When a mixture of isomers or more than one diacid is used, a copolyester or a mixture of two polyesters may be used as the cycloaliphatic polyester polymer.

[0051] Chemical equivalents of these diacids including esters may also be used in the preparation of the cycloaliphatic polyesters. Suitable examples of the chemical equivalents of the diacids are alkyl esters, e.g., dialkyl esters, diaryl esters, anhydrides, acid chlorides, acid bromides, and the like, as well as combinations comprising at least one of the foregoing chemical equivalents. The preferred chemical equivalents comprise the dialkyl esters of the cycloaliphatic diacids, and the most preferred chemical equivalent comprises the dimethyl ester of the acid, particularly dimethyl-trans-1,4-cyclohexanedicarboxylate.

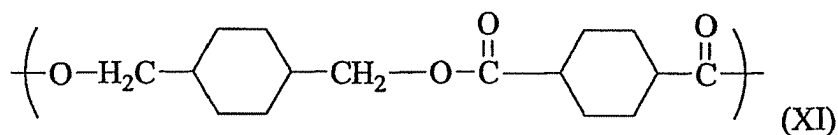
[0052] Dimethyl-1,4-cyclohexanedicarboxylate can be obtained by ring hydrogenation of dimethylterephthalate, and two isomers having the carboxylic acid groups in the cis- and trans-positions are obtained. The isomers can be separated, the trans-isomer being especially preferred. Mixtures of the isomers may also be used as detailed above.

[0053] The polyester polymers are generally obtained through the condensation or ester interchange polymerization of the diol or diol chemical equivalent component with the diacid or diacid chemical equivalent component and having recurring units of the formula (X):



wherein R^3 represents an alkyl or cycloalkyl radical containing 2 to 12 carbon atoms and which is the residue of a straight chain, branched, or cycloaliphatic alkane diol having 2 to 12 carbon atoms or chemical equivalents thereof; and R^4 is an alkyl or a cycloaliphatic radical which is the decarboxylated residue derived from a diacid, with the proviso that at least one of R^3 or R^4 is a cycloalkyl group.

[0054] A preferred cycloaliphatic polyester is poly(1,4-cyclohexane-dimethanol-1,4-cyclohexanedicarboxylate) (PC-CD) having recurring units of formula (XI)



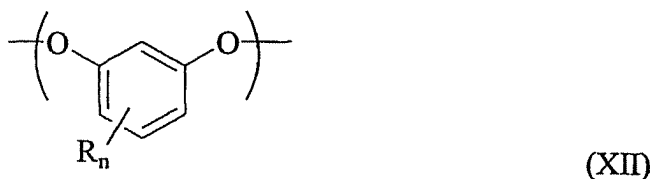
wherein in the formula (IX) R³ is a cyclohexane ring, and wherein R⁴ is a cyclohexane ring derived from cyclohexanedicarboxylate or a chemical equivalent thereof and is selected from the cis- or trans-isomer or a mixture of cis- and trans-isomers thereof. Cycloaliphatic polyester polymers can be generally made in the presence of a suitable catalyst such as a tetra(2-ethyl hexyl)titanate, in a suitable amount, generally about 50 to 400 ppm of titanium based upon the total weight of the final product.

[0055] PCCD is generally completely miscible with the polycarbonate. It is generally desirable for a polycarbonate-PCCD mixture to have a melt volume rate of greater than or equal to about 5 cubic centimeters/10 minutes (cc/10 min or ml/10 min) to less than or equal to about 150 cubic centimeters/10 minutes when measured at 265°C, at a load of 2.16 kilograms and a four minute dwell time. Within this range, it is generally desirable to have a melt volume rate of greater than or equal to about 7, preferably greater than or equal to about 9, and more preferably greater than or equal to about 10 cc/10 min when measured at 265°C, at a load of 2.16 kilograms and a four minute dwell time. Also desirable within this range, is a melt volume rate of less than or equal to about 125, preferably less than or equal to about 110, and more preferably less than or equal to about 100 cc/10 minutes.

[0056] Other preferred cycloaliphatic polyesters that may be mixed with the polycarbonate are polyethylene terephthalate (PET), polybutylene terephthalate (PBT), poly(trimethylene terephthalate) (PTT), poly(cyclohexanedimethanol-co-ethylene terephthalate) (PETG), poly(ethylene naphthalate) (PEN), and poly(butylene naphthalate) (PBN).

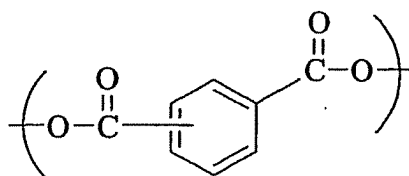
[0057] Another preferred polyester that may be mixed with other polymers are polyarylates. Polyarylates generally refers to polyesters of aromatic dicarboxylic acids and bisphenols. Polyarylate copolymers that include carbonate linkages in addition to the aryl ester linkages, are termed polyester-carbonates, and may also be advantageously utilized in the mixtures. The polyarylates can be prepared in solution or by the melt polymerization of aromatic dicarboxylic acids or their ester forming derivatives with bisphenols or their derivatives.

[0058] In general, it is preferred for the polyarylates to comprise at least one diphenol residue in combination with at least one aromatic dicarboxylic acid residue. The preferred diphenol residue, illustrated in formula (XII), is derived from a 1,3-dihydroxybenzene moiety, referred to throughout this specification as resorcinol or resorcinol moiety. Resorcinol or resorcinol moieties include both unsubstituted 1,3-dihydroxybenzene and substituted 1,3-dihydroxybenzenes.



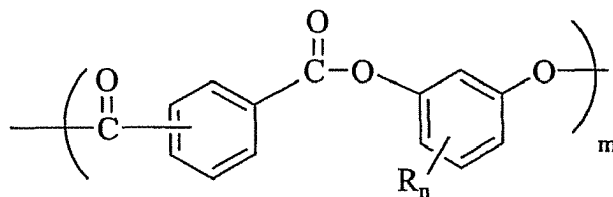
[0059] In formula (X), R is at least one of C₁₋₁₂ alkyl or halogen, and n is 0 to 3. Suitable dicarboxylic acid residues include aromatic dicarboxylic acid residues derived from monocyclic moieties, preferably isophthalic acid, terephthalic acid, or mixtures of isophthalic and terephthalic acids, or from polycyclic moieties such as diphenyl dicarboxylic acid, diphenylether dicarboxylic acid, and naphthalene-2,6-dicarboxylic acid, and the like, as well as combinations comprising at least one of the foregoing polycyclic moieties. The preferred polycyclic moiety is naphthalene-2,6-dicarboxylic acid.

[0060] Preferably, the aromatic dicarboxylic acid residues are derived from mixtures of isophthalic and/or terephthalic acids as generally illustrated in formula (XIII).



(XIII)

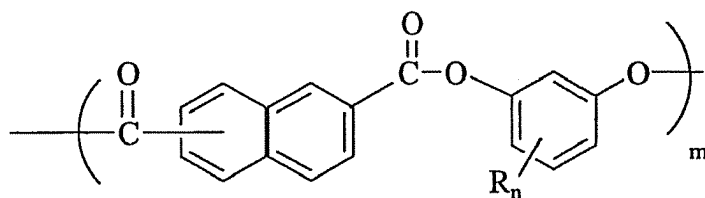
[0061] Therefore, in one embodiment the polyarylates comprise resorcinol arylate polyesters as illustrated in formula (XIV) wherein R and n are previously defined for formula (XI).



(XIV)

wherein R is at least one of C₁₋₁₂ alkyl or halogen, n is 0 to about 3, and m is at least about 8. It is preferred for R to be hydrogen. Preferably, n is zero and m is about 10 and about 300. The molar ratio of isophthalate to terephthalate is about 0.25:1 to about 4.0:1.

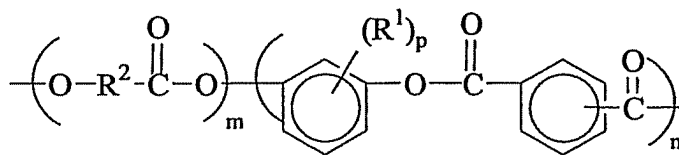
[0062] In another embodiment, the polyarylate comprises thermally stable resorcinol arylate polyesters that have polycyclic aromatic radicals as shown in formula (XV)



(XV)

wherein R is at least one of C₁₋₁₂ alkyl or halogen, n is 0 to about 3, and m is at least about 8.

[0063] In another embodiment, the polyarylates are copolymerized to form block copolyestercarbonates, which comprise carbonate and arylate blocks. They include polymers comprising structural units of the formula (XVI)



(XVI)

wherein each R¹ is independently halogen or C₁₋₁₂ alkyl, m is at least 1, p is about 0 to about 3, each R² is independently a divalent organic radical, and n is at least about 4. Preferably n is at least about 10, more preferably at least about 20 and most preferably about 30 to about 150. Preferably m is at least about 3, more preferably at least about 10 and most preferably about 20 to about 200. In an exemplary embodiment m is present in an amount of about 20 and 50.

[0064] It is generally desirable for the weight average molecular weight of the polyester to be about 500 to about 1,000,000 grams/mole (g/mole). In one embodiment, the polyester has a weight average molecular weight of about 10,000 to about 200,000 g/mole. In another embodiment, the polyester has a weight average molecular weight of about 30,000 to about 150,000 g/mole. In yet another embodiment, the polyester has a weight average molecular weight of

about 50,000 to about 120,000 g/mole. An exemplary molecular weight for the polyester utilized in the cap layer is 60,000 and 120,000 g/mole. These molecular weights are determined against a polystyrene standard.

[0065] In one embodiment, it is desirable to match the melt viscosity of the thermoplastic polymer used in the core layer with the melt viscosity of the thermoplastic polymer used in the cap layer during the formation of the multilayer sheet. In another embodiment, it is desirable for the melt viscosity of the thermoplastic polymer used in the cap layer to be equal to the melt viscosity of the thermoplastic polymer used in the core layer, at the point of initial contact of the two melts during the formation of the multilayer sheet. In yet another embodiment, it is desirable for the melt viscosity of the thermoplastic polymer used in the cap layer to be within 1% of the melt viscosity of the thermoplastic polymer used in the core layer, at the point of initial contact of the two melts during the formation of the multilayer sheet. In yet another embodiment, it is desirable for the melt viscosity of the thermoplastic polymer used in the cap layer to be within 5% of the melt viscosity of the thermoplastic polymer used in the core layer, at the point of initial contact of the two melts during the formation of the multilayer sheet. In yet another embodiment, it is desirable for the melt viscosity of the thermoplastic polymer used in the cap layer to be within 10% of the melt viscosity of the thermoplastic polymer used in the core layer, at the point of initial contact of the two melts during the formation of the multilayer sheet. In yet another embodiment, it is desirable for the melt viscosity of the thermoplastic polymer used in the cap layer to be within 20% of the melt viscosity of the thermoplastic polymer used in the core layer, at the point of initial contact of the two melts during the formation of the multilayer sheet.

[0066] The polyester and/or copolyestercarbonates are generally used in amounts of about 70 to about 99.9 weight percent (wt%) based upon the weight of the cap layer. Within this range, an amount of greater than or equal to about 75, preferably greater than or equal to about 80, and more preferably greater than or equal to about 85 wt% may be used, based upon the weight of the cap layer. Also desirable within this range, is an amount of greater than or equal to about 98, preferably greater than or equal to about 97, and more preferably greater than or equal to about 95 wt% may be used, based upon the weight of the cap layer.

[0067] The cap layer generally comprises a suitable UV absorber. Suitable UV absorbers are benzophenones such as 2,4 dihydroxybenzophenone, 2-hydroxy-4-methoxybenzophenone, 2-hydroxy-4-n-octoxybenzophenone, 4-dodecyloxy-2 hydroxybenzophenone, 2-hydroxy-4-octadecyloxybenzophenone, 2,2' dihydroxy- 4 methoxybenzophenone, 2,2' dihydroxy-4,4'dimethoxybenzophenone, 2,2' dihydroxy-4 methoxybenzophenone, 2,2', 4,4' tetra hydroxybenzophenone, 2-hydroxy-4-methoxy-5 sulfobenzophenone, 2-hydroxy-4-methoxy-2'-carboxybenzophenone, 2,2'dihydroxy-4,4'dimethoxy-5 sulfobenzophenone, 2-hydroxy-4-(2-hydroxy-3-methylaryloxy) propoxybenzophenone, 2-hydroxy-4 chlorobenzophenone, or the like; benzotriazoles such as 2,2'-(hydroxy-5-methyl phenyl) benzotriazole, 2,2'-(hydroxy-3', 5'-ditert-butyl phenyl) benzotriazole, and 2,2'-(hydroxy-X-tert, butyl-5'-methyl-phenyl) benzotriazole, or the like; salicylates such as phenyl salicylate, carboxyphenyl salicylate, p-octylphenyl salicylate, strontium salicylate, p-tert butylphenyl salicylate, methyl salicylate, dodecyl salicylate, or the like; and also other ultraviolet absorbers such as resorcinol monobenzoate, 2'ethyl hexyl-2-cyano, 3-phenylcinnamate, 2- ethylhexyl-2-cyano-3,3-diphenyl acrylate, ethyl-2-cyano-3,3-diphenyl acrylate, [2-2'-thiobis(4-t-octylphenolate)-1-n-butylamine, or the like, or combinations comprising at least one of the foregoing UV absorbers. A preferred UV absorber for use in the cap layer is UVINUL® 3030, commercially available from BASF.

[0068] The UV absorbers are generally used in amounts of about 5 wt% to about 15 wt%, based upon the weight of the cap layer. In one embodiment, the UV absorber may be used in an amount of 7 to about 14 wt%, based on the total weight of the cap layer. In yet another embodiment, the UV absorber may be used in an amount of 8 to about 12 wt%, based on the total weight of the cap layer. In one embodiment, the UV absorber may be used in an amount of 9 to about 11 wt%, based on the total weight of the cap layer.

[0069] It is generally desirable for the cap layer to have an average thickness of about 10 to about 120 micrometers. In one embodiment, the cap layer may have a thickness of about 15 to about 100 micrometers. In another embodiment, the cap layer may have a thickness of about 20 to about 90 micrometers. In yet another embodiment, the cap layer may have a thickness of about 25 to about 80 micrometers.

[0070] The multilayer sheet may generally be produced by extrusion followed by laminating the sheets in a roll mill or a roll stack. The extrusion of the individual layers of the multilayered sheet may be performed in a single screw extruder or in a twin screw extruder. It is desirable to extrude the layers in a single screw extruder and to laminate the layers in a roll mill. It is more desirable to co-extrude the layers in a single screw extruder or twin screw extruder and to optionally laminate the layers in a roll mill. The roll mill may be either a two roll or three roll mill, as is desired. Co-extrusion of the layers by single screw extruders is generally desirable for the manufacturing of the multilayered sheet.

[0071] In one embodiment, in the extrusion of the core layer and the cap layer, the additives (e.g., IR absorbing additive and UV absorber) may be added to the extruder along with the thermoplastic polymer at the feed throat. In another embodiment, in the extrusion of the core layer and the cap layer, the additives may be added to the extruder in the form of a masterbatch. While the thermoplastic polymer is fed to the throat of the extruder, the masterbatch may be fed either at the throat of the extruder or downstream of the throat. In one exemplary embodiment, in the production of the core layer, the thermoplastic polymer is fed to the throat of a single screw extruder while the IR absorbing additive is added

in masterbatch form downstream of the feed throat. In another exemplary embodiment, in the production of the cap layer, the thermoplastic polymer is fed to the throat of a single screw extruder while the UV absorber is added in masterbatch form downstream of the feed throat.

[0072] In one embodiment, the desired composition for the core layer and the cap layer may be separately precompounded prior to coextrusion. In this event, the precompounded materials may be first melt blended in a twin screw extruder, single screw extruder, buss kneader, roll mill, or the like, prior to being formed into a suitable shapes such as pellets, sheets, and the like, for further co-extrusion. The precompounded core and cap layer compositions may then be fed into the respective extruders for co-extrusion.

[0073] As stated above, it is desirable to co-extrude the cap and the core layer. In one embodiment, in one manner of co-extruding of the multilayered sheet, the melt streams (extrudates) from the various extruders are fed into a feed block die where the various melt streams are combined before entering the die. In another embodiment, the melt streams from the various extruders are fed into a multi-manifold internal combining die. The different melt streams enter the die separately and join just inside the final die orifice. In yet another embodiment, the melt streams from the various extruders are fed into a multi-manifold external combining die. The external combining dies have completely separate manifolds for the different melt streams as well as distinct orifices through which the streams leave the die separately, joining just beyond the die exit. The layers are combined while still molten and just downstream of the die. An exemplary die used in the production of the multilayered sheet is a feed block die. In an exemplary embodiment, the extruders used for the co-extrusion of the cap and core layers are single screw extruders respectively. The co-extruded sheet may optionally be calendared in a roll mill if desired. The multilayered sheet generally has a thickness of about 0.5 to about 35 millimeters.

[0074] In another embodiment, the respective ingredients used to form the cap layer and/or the core layer are first extruded in either a single or twin screw extruder. The extrudate is in the form of pellets. The pellets are then separately molded in a molding operation to form slabs, plaques, or the like. The molding operation can involve injection molding, blow molding, compression molding, vacuum forming, or the like. In one embodiment, a slab comprising the IR absorbing additive can be adhesively bonded to a slab comprising a UV absorbing additive to form a multilayered sheet.

[0075] It is desirable for the multilayered sheet to absorb an amount of greater than or equal to about 90% of all the IR radiation incident upon the surface of the sheet. In one embodiment, the multilayered sheet may absorb an amount of greater than or equal to about 60% of all the IR radiation incident upon the surface of the sheet. In another embodiment, the multilayered sheet may absorb an amount of greater than or equal to about 50% of all the IR radiation incident upon the surface of the sheet. In yet another embodiment, the multilayered sheet may absorb an amount of greater than or equal to about 40% of all the IR radiation incident upon the surface of the sheet. In yet another embodiment, the multilayered sheet may absorb an amount of greater than or equal to about 20% of all the IR radiation incident upon the surface of the sheet. In yet another embodiment, the multilayered sheet may absorb an amount of greater than or equal to about 5% of all the IR radiation incident upon the surface of the sheet.

[0076] It is desirable for the multilayered sheet to absorb an amount of greater than or equal to about 90% of all the UV radiation incident upon the surface of the sheet. In one embodiment, the multilayered sheet may absorb an amount of greater than or equal to about 60% of all the UV radiation incident upon the surface of the sheet. In another embodiment, the multilayered sheet may absorb an amount of greater than or equal to about 50% of all the UV radiation incident upon the surface of the sheet. In yet another embodiment, the multilayered sheet may absorb an amount of greater than or equal to about 40% of all the UV radiation incident upon the surface of the sheet. In yet another embodiment, the multilayered sheet may absorb an amount of greater than or equal to about 20% of all the UV radiation incident upon the surface of the sheet. In yet another embodiment, the multilayered sheet may absorb an amount of greater than or equal to about 5% of all the UV radiation incident upon the surface of the sheet.

[0077] While it is generally desirable for the multilayer sheet to absorb as much electromagnetic radiation as possible in the UV and IR regions of the electromagnetic spectrum, it is desirable for the multilayered sheet to be transparent to light in the visible region of the electromagnetic spectrum. The visible region of the electromagnetic spectrum generally has wavelengths of about 400 to about 700 nm. It is desirable for the sheet to have a transmissivity to light in the visible region of greater than or equal to about 20%. In one embodiment, it is desirable for the sheet to have a transmissivity to light in the visible region of greater than or equal to about 30%. In another embodiment, it is desirable for the sheet to have a transmissivity to light in the visible region of greater than or equal to about 40%. In yet another embodiment, it is desirable for the sheet for have a transmissivity of greater than or equal to about 50%.

[0078] It is also desirable for the multilayered sheet to have a haze of less than or equal to about 5%. In one embodiment, the haze may be less than or equal to about 2%. In another embodiment, the haze may be less than or equal to about 1.8%. In another embodiment, the haze may be less than or equal to about 1.6%.

[0079] If the resulting multilayer sheet is in the form of a multiwall sheet, it is generally desirable to have a haze of less than 25%. In one embodiment, the haze may be less than or equal to about 20%. In another embodiment, the haze may be less than or equal to about 15%. In another embodiment, the haze may be less than or equal to about 10%.

[0080] The multilayer sheet thus produced may be advantageously used in automobiles, residential and office buildings or other areas where heat produced by exposure to IR radiation is undesirable. In one embodiment, the sheets may be

used as roofing or glazing materials, after being co-extruded as multiwall sheets with air channels in between the walls as shown in Figure 3. Figure 3 is a schematic depiction of a multiwall sheet wherein the respective sheets are separated by brackets and having air pockets in between the brackets. The sheet thickness is also depicted in the Figure 3 and encompasses the brackets as well as the individual multilayer sheets. The brackets may also be made of a thermoplastic polymer such as those described above. In one embodiment, the bracket may be manufactured from polycarbonate, polyester, or polyestercarbonate-polyester.

[0081] The multilayer sheet thus formed may also be subjected to additional processing such as thermoforming, vacuum molding, blow molding, shaping, and the like, to produce materials having different shapes and geometries.

[0082] The following examples, which are meant to be exemplary, not limiting, illustrate compositions and methods of manufacturing some of the various embodiments of the multilayered sheets using various materials and apparatus.

EXAMPLES

[0083] This example was conducted to demonstrate the utility of using cesium tungsten oxide in a polycarbonate plaque. The compositions along with some of the properties are shown in Table 1. As can be seen in Table 1 the IR absorbing additive was first compounded with the polycarbonate to form a masterbatch. The masterbatch contained cesium tungsten oxide in an amount of 21 wt%, based on the weight of the masterbatch. The masterbatch along with the respective ingredients for each sample were fed into the throat of the extruder and extruded into pellets.

[0084] Sample # 1 does not contain the UV absorber and the hindered phenol. Sample # 2 does not contain the hindered phenol.

[0085] All samples were prepared by melt blending the compositions on a Werner & Pfleiderer 25 millimeter (mm) intermeshing twin screw extruder at 300 rpm. The extruder was fitted with 8 barrels. The barrel temperatures from throat to die were set at 40-200-250-270-300-300-300-300°C respectively. The extruded pellets were then dried and subjected to injecting molding. The injection molding was conducted under regular conditions or abusive molding conditions.

[0086] The regular molding conditions are as follows: 2.5 mm thick color plaques were injection molded on an Engel 75Ton injection molding machine having 4 temperature zones set at 280-290-300-295°C respectively. The mold temperature was set at 90°C.

[0087] The abusive molding conditions are as follows: The residence time was 12 minutes in the barrel where the temperature zones were set at 330°C.

[0088] The PC 145 polycarbonate has a weight average molecular weight (Mw) of 28,000 grams/mole. IRGAPHOS® 168 was purchased from Great Lakes Chemicals. TINUVIN® 234 was purchased from Ciba Speciality Chemicals. IRGANOX® 1076 was purchased from Ciba Speciality Chemicals. Cesium tungsten oxide was purchased from Sumitomo Metal Mining Corporation.

[0089] Light transmission and haze were measured according to ASTM D 1003, while the lab color was measured according to CIE lab DIN 5033. The results are shown in Table 1 below. Some of the properties are shown in the Table 1 below.

Table 1

Sample #	1	2	3
COMPOSITION	Wt%	Wt%	Wt%
PC145 Polycarbonate	79.95	79.8	79.75
IRGAPHOS® 168 (Phosphite)	0.05	0.05	0.05
TINUVIN® 234 (UV absorber)	---	0.15	0.15
IRGANOX® 1076 (Hindered phenol)	---		0.05
Masterbatch of Cs(WO ₃) ₃ (0.21% in PC)	20	20	20
Properties			
MVR @ 300°C 1.2kg / 4min	11.3	11.3	11.3
MVR @ 300°C 1.2kg / 12min	12.1	12	11.9
MOLDING COLOR - REGULAR MOLDING			

(continued)

Sample #	1	2	3
L	87.2	87.5	87.4
a	-3.9	-3.8	-3.9
b	3.8	4.1	4.2
LT%	72.9	71.9	71.8
Haze	1.3	1.2	1.2
MOLDING COLOR - ABUSIVE MOLDING			
L	83.1	83.3	83.4
a	-5.2	-5.1	-5.0
b	7.7	8.2	8.6
LT%	63.2	63.8	63.8
Haze	1.5	1.5	1.5
DELTA ABUSIVE MOLDED			
Delta b	3.9	4.2	4.4
delta Light Transmission %	9.6	8.1	8.0
Light Transmission and Haze is measured according ASTM D1003 norm			
L ab (color) is measured according CIE lab DIN 5033			

[0090] As can be seen in the Table 1, the difference in light transmission (delta Light Transmission %) shows a significant difference between the Samples # 2 and 3 and Sample # 1. Both Samples # 2 and 3 show a reduced value for the delta Light Transmission % of about 8.0 percent. Sample # 1, on the other hand, has a higher value of 9.6%. Delta light transmission is the difference between light transmission after abusive molding and light transmission after standard molding. It gives an indication of the thermal stability. A higher value of Delta light transmission reflects a greater difference between the abusive molding and the regular molding, which in general is undesirable since it points to greater degradation.

[0091] It is surprising that addition of a UV stabilizer to a compound of $\text{PC/Cs(WO}_3)_3$ and a phosphite apparently improves the thermal stability. It may also reflect a synergy between the cesium tungsten phosphate and the UV absorber, which is unexpected.

[0092] Table 2 below details the solar properties for the plaque for the regularly molded samples and the abusively molded samples.

Table 2

SOLAR PROPERTIES - REGULAR MOLDING	#1	#2	#3
Visible Light Transmission (Tvis)	70.8	71.2	71.3
Total Solar Transmission (TST)	53.6	53.9	53.9
Direct Solar Transmission (DST)	39.8	40.1	40.1
Total Light Reflection (TLR)	8.3	8.3	8.3
Direct Solar Reflection (DSR)	6.7	6.6	6.6
IR absorption (Abs)	53.6	53.3	53.3
Heat transfer towards the inside (HTTI)	13.8	13.7	13.8

(continued)

SOLAR PROPERTIES - REGULAR MOLDING	#1	#2	#3
Tvis / TST	1.32	1.32	1.32
SOLAR PROPERTIES - ABUSIVE MOLDING			
Visible Light Transmission (Tvis)	63.6	64.1	63.9
Total Solar Transmission (TST)	48.6	48.7	48.7
Direct Solar Transmission (DST)	32.9	33.3	33
Total Light Reflection (TLR)	7.6	7.7	7.7
Direct Solar Reflection (DSR)	6.3	6.3	6.3
IR absorption (Abs)	60.8	60.7	60.7
Heat transfer towards the inside (HTTI)	15.7	15.7	15.7
Tvis / TST	1.31	1.32	1.31

[0093] Once again from the Table 2 it may be seen that there appears to be a synergy between the UV absorbing additive and the IR absorbing additive. For the regularly molded sample, it can be seen that there is an improvement in total solar transmission when the sample contains both the UV absorbing additive and the IR absorbing additive. In general, in polycarbonates, the addition of an increased amount of additive generally degrades properties such as light transmission, impact and the like.

[0094] In this instance however, it can be seen that the Samples #2 and 3 containing the UV absorbing additive and the IR absorbing additive have a higher total solar transmission than the Sample # 1 which does not contain the UV absorbing additive. This result is novel and unexpected.

[0095] While the invention has been described with reference to an exemplary embodiment, it will be understood by those skilled in the art that various changes may be made and equivalents may be substituted for elements thereof without departing from the scope of the invention. In addition, many modifications may be made to adapt a particular situation or material to the teachings of the invention without departing from the essential scope thereof. Therefore, it is intended that the invention not be limited to the particular embodiment disclosed as the best mode contemplated for carrying out this invention, but that the invention will include all embodiments falling within the scope of the appended claims.

Claims

1. A multilayered sheet comprising:

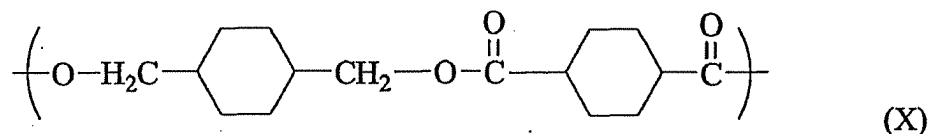
a core layer comprising a thermoplastic polymer and an IR absorbing additive; wherein the IR absorbing additive is potassium tungsten oxide, rubidium tungsten oxide, cesium tungsten oxide, thallium tungsten oxide, or a combination comprising at least one of the foregoing oxides; and

a first cap layer comprising a thermoplastic polymer and a UV absorber; wherein a surface of the first cap layer is disposed upon and in intimate contact with a surface of the core layer.

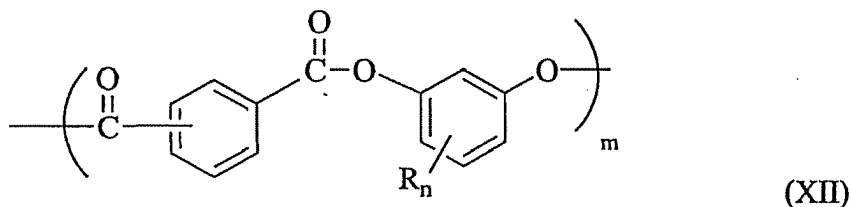
2. The sheet of Claim 1, further comprising a second cap layer comprising a thermoplastic polymer and the UV absorber; wherein the second cap layer is disposed upon and in intimate contact with a surface of the core layer opposite the surface in contact with the first cap layer.

3. The sheet of Claim 1 or 2, wherein the core layer further comprises lanthanum boride (LaB₆), praseodymium boride (PrB₆), neodymium boride (NdB₆), cerium boride (CeB₆), gadolinium boride (GdB₆), terbium boride (TbB₆), dysprosium boride (DyB₆), holmium boride (HoB₆), yttrium boride (YB₆), samarium boride (SmB₆), europium boride (EuB₆), erbium boride (ErB₆), thulium boride (TmB₆), ytterbium boride (YbB₆), lutetium boride (LuB₆), strontium boride (SrB₆), calcium boride (CaB₆), titanium boride (TiB₂), zirconium boride (ZrB₂), hafnium boride (HfB₂), vanadium boride (VB₂), tantalum boride (TaB₂), chromium borides (CrB and CrB₂), molybdenum borides (MoB₂, Mo₂B₅ and MoB), tungsten boride (WB₂), or a combination comprising at least one of the foregoing borides.

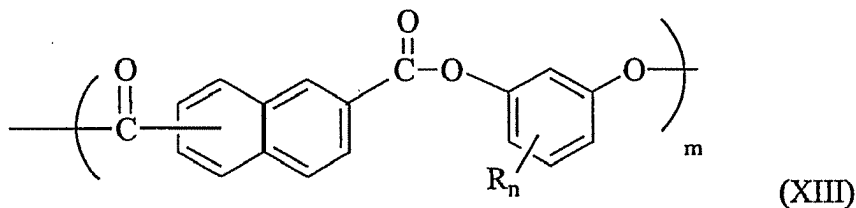
4. The sheet of Claim 1, 2 or 3, wherein the IR absorbing additive comprises nanosized particles having average particle dimensions of less than or equal to about 200 nanometers and wherein the IR absorbing additive is present in amounts of about 0.001 to about 5 gram/square meter, measured with respect to the surface of the core layer.
5. The sheet of Claim 1, 2 or 3, wherein the IR absorbing additive is present in amounts of about 0.02 ppm to about 3000 ppm based on the total weight of the core layer.
6. The sheet of Claim 1 or 2, wherein the thermoplastic polymer is bisphenol A polycarbonate, copolyestercarbonate, polyester or a blend of polyester with polycarbonate.
7. The sheet of Claim 6, wherein the polyester is a cycloaliphatic polyester, a polyarylate or a combination of a cycloaliphatic polyester with a polyarylate.
8. The sheet of Claim 7, wherein the cycloaliphatic polyester has the structure (X)



or wherein the polyarylate is resorcinol arylate polyester having the structure (XII)

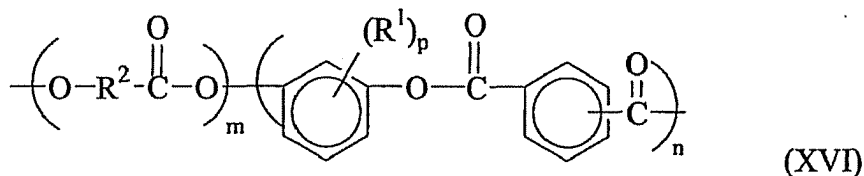


or the structure (XIII)



where R is a C₁₋₁₂ alkyl or halogen, n is 0 to 3, and m is at least about 8.

9. The sheet of Claim 7, wherein the polyarylate is further copolymerized to form block copolyestercarbonates, comprising structural units of the formula (XVI)



wherein each R¹ is independently halogen or C₁₋₁₂ alkyl, m is at least 1, p is about 0 to about 3, each R² is

independently a divalent organic radical, and n is at least about 4.

10. The sheet of Claim 1, having an infrared absorption of greater than or equal to about 20%, an ultraviolet radiation absorption of greater than or equal to about 20%, and a transmissivity of greater than or equal to about 40% in the visible region.

11. A multilayered sheet comprising:

a core layer comprising polycarbonate, cesium tungsten oxide; a thermal stabilizer, and a UV absorbing additive, wherein the IR absorbing additive is a metal oxide; and
a first cap layer comprising a polyester and the UV absorbing additive; wherein a surface of the first cap layer is disposed upon and in intimate contact with a surface of the core layer.

12. The sheet of Claim 11, further comprising a second cap layer comprising a polyester and the UV absorbing additive; wherein the second cap layer is disposed upon and in intimate contact with a surface of the core layer opposite the surface in contact with the first cap layer.

13. A method for manufacturing a multilayered sheet comprising:

disposing a first cap layer comprising a thermoplastic polymer and an ultraviolet radiation absorbing additive onto a surface of a core layer comprising a thermoplastic polymer and an IR absorbing additive, wherein the IR absorbing additive is potassium tungsten oxide, rubidium tungsten oxide, cesium tungsten oxide, thallium tungsten oxide, or a combination comprising at least one of the foregoing oxides.

14. The method of Claim 13, wherein the core layer is produced simultaneously or sequentially with the first cap layer.

15. The method of Claim 13 or 14, further comprising disposing a second cap layer comprising a thermoplastic polymer and an ultraviolet radiation absorbing additive onto a surface of the core layer opposite the surface contacting the first cap layer.

16. The method of Claim 15, wherein the second cap layer is produced simultaneously or sequentially with the first cap layer and/or the core layer.

17. A method for manufacturing a multilayered sheet comprising:

co-extruding a core layer comprising polycarbonate and an IR absorbing additive with a first cap layer comprising polyester and an ultraviolet radiation absorber, wherein the IR absorbing additive is potassium tungsten oxide, rubidium tungsten oxide, cesium tungsten oxide, thallium tungsten oxide, or a combination comprising at least one of the foregoing oxides.

18. The method of Claim 17, further comprising co-extruding a second cap layer with the first cap layer and the core layer or further comprising laminating the multilayered sheet.

19. A composition comprising:

a thermoplastic resin and an IR absorbing additive; wherein the IR absorbing additive is a metal oxide that comprises potassium tungsten oxide, rubidium tungsten oxide, cesium tungsten oxide, thallium tungsten oxide, or a combination comprising at least one of the foregoing oxides.

20. The composition of Claim 19, further comprising lanthanum boride (LaB₆), praseodymium boride (PrB₆), neodymium boride (NdB₆), cerium boride (CeB₆), gadolinium boride (GdB₆), terbium boride (TbB₆), dysprosium boride (DyB₆), holmium boride (HoB₆), yttrium boride (YB₆), samarium boride (SmB₆), europium boride (EuB₆), erbium boride (ErB₆), thulium boride (TmB₆), ytterbium boride (YbB₆), lutetium boride (LuB₆), strontium boride (SrB₆), calcium boride (CaB₆), titanium boride (TiB₂), zirconium boride (ZrB₂), hafnium boride (HfB₂), vanadium boride (VB₂), tantalum boride (TaB₂), chromium borides (CrB and CrB₂), molybdenum borides (MoB₂, Mo₂B₅ and MoB), tungsten boride (WB₂), or a combination comprising at least one of the foregoing borides.

21. An article comprising the multilayered sheet of any one of Claims 1 to 12.

22. An article manufactured by the method of any one of Claims 13 to 18.

23. An article manufactured from the composition of Claim 19 or 20.

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FIG. 1

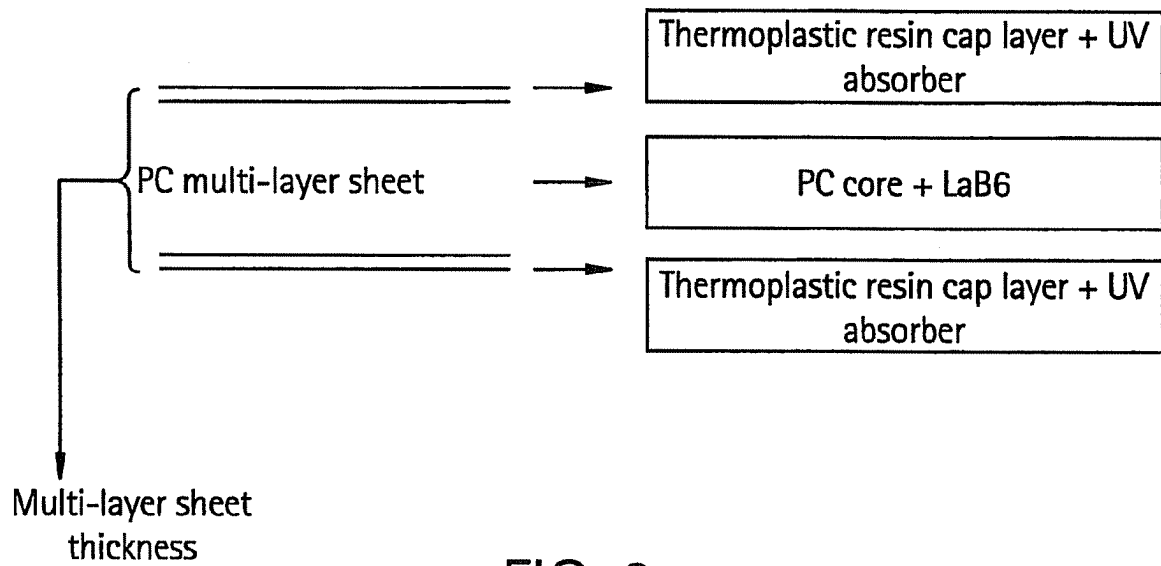


FIG. 2

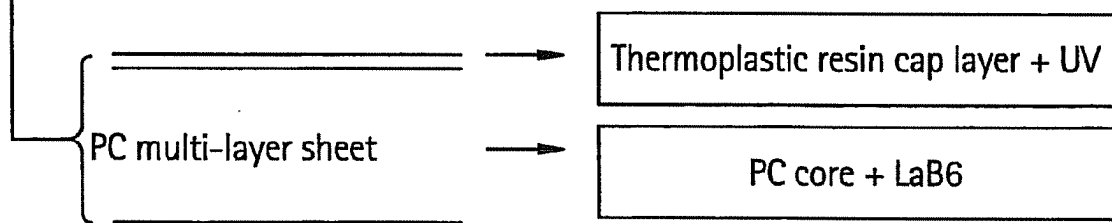


FIG. 3

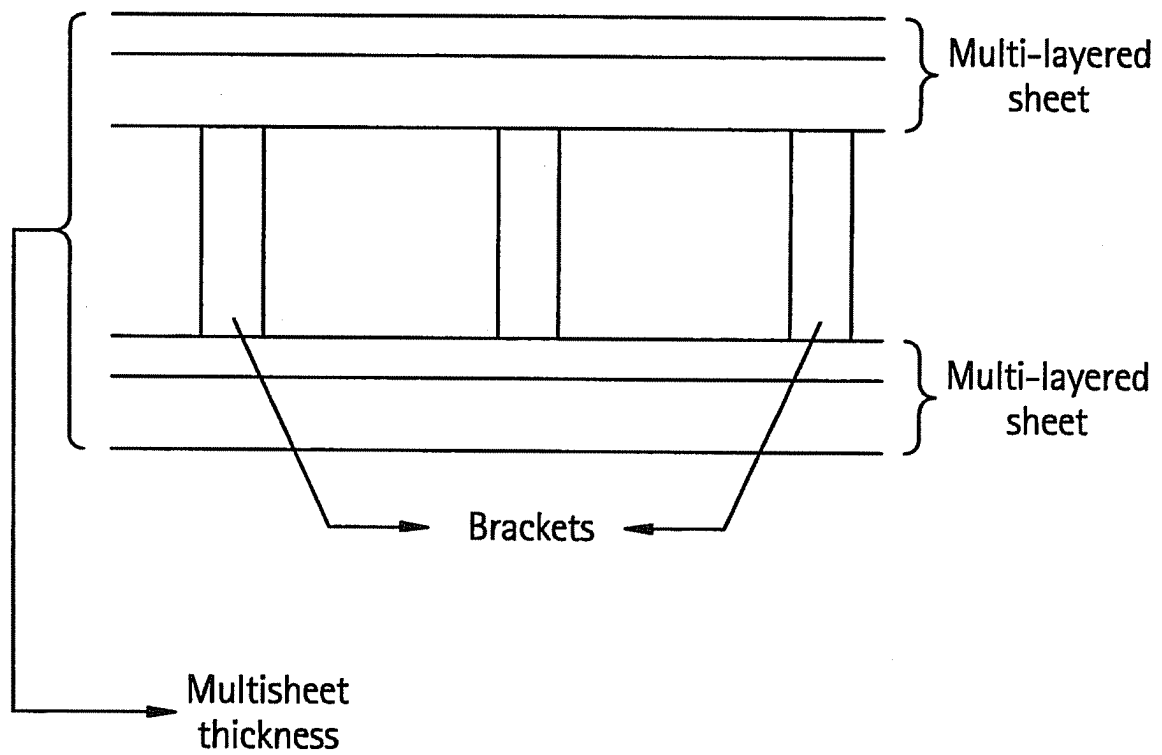


FIG. 4

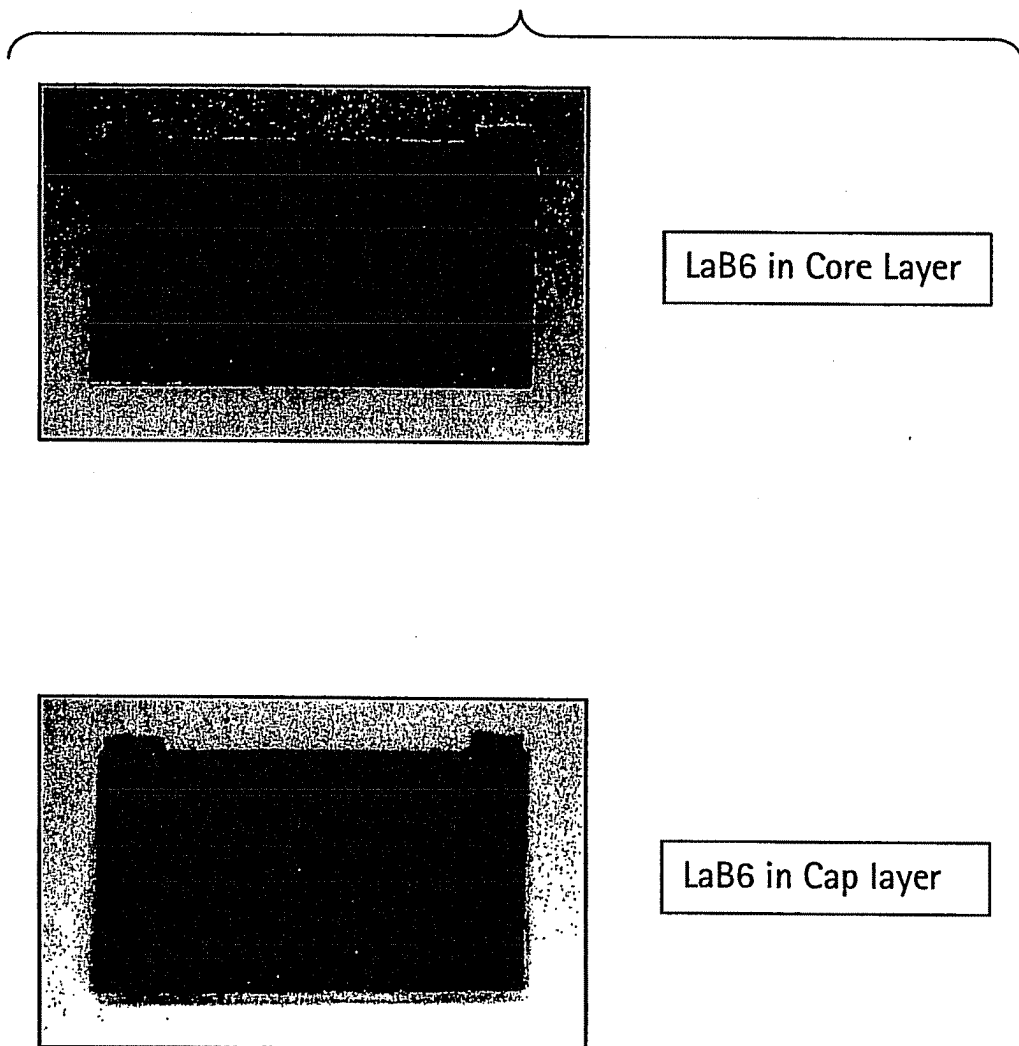
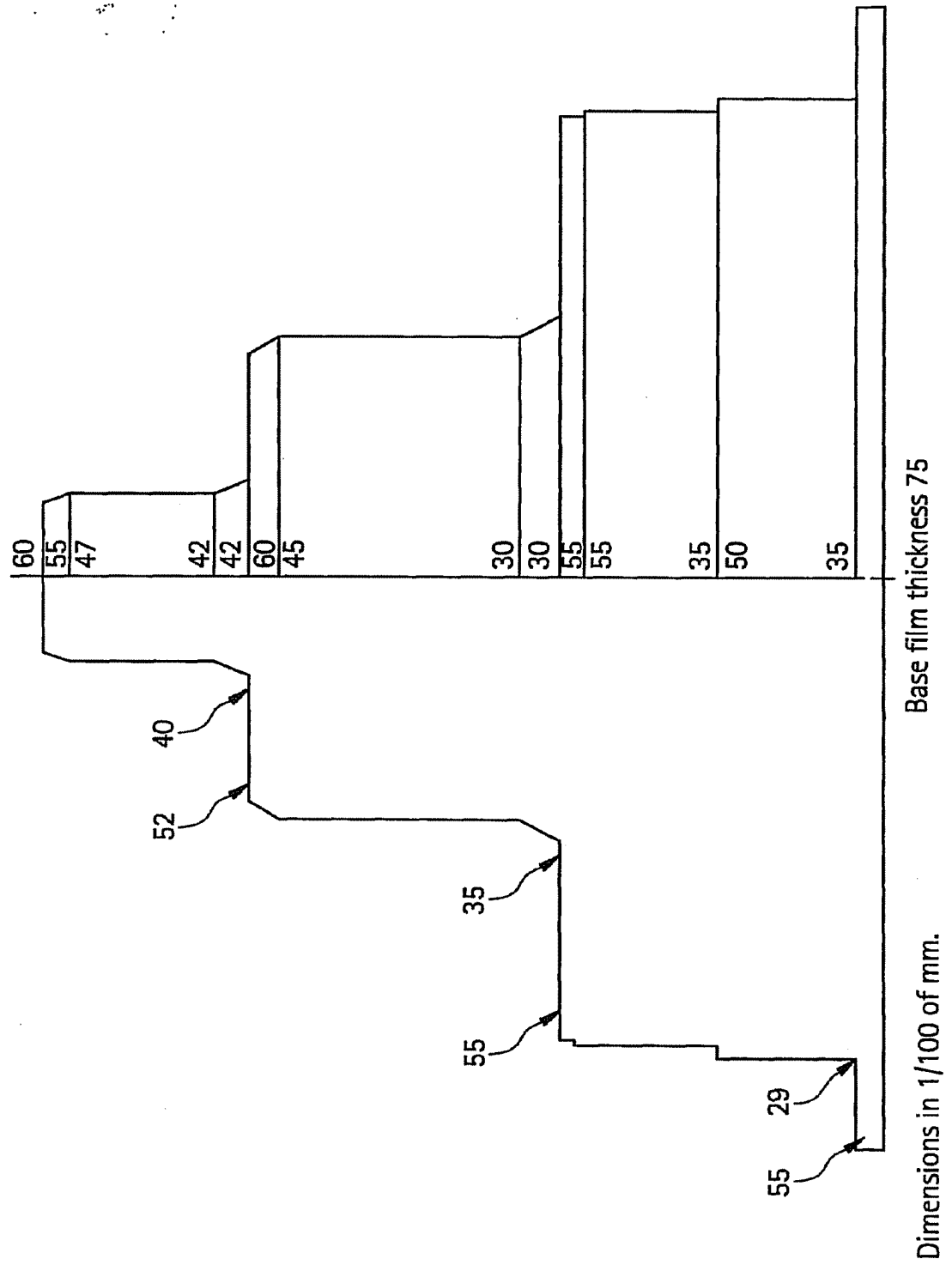


FIG. 5





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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
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Place of search The Hague		Date of completion of the search 27 September 2006	Examiner Derz, Thomas
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